increasing tobacco production and organising training of farmers are:—

Scheme	1986-87 (Rupees)			1987-88 (Rupees)		
	Expdr.	Receipts	Net Expdr.	Expdr.	Receipts	Net Expdr.
Scheme for Production and distribution of pure seed and seedlings of tobacco in A.P.	425000	500000	..	456000	400000	56000
Tobacco Seed Multiplication Centre, Anand.	853000	500000	253000	829000	600000	229000
Scheme for imparting trainnng in the improved methods of tobacco cultivation, curing marketing of bidi tobacco run by Gujarat Agri, Univ., Anand.	69000	..	69000	54000	..	54000
Scheme for imparting training in the improved method of tobacco cultivation. curing, marketng etc. at CTRI Rajamundry.	72000	..	72000	73000	..	73000
	1419000	1000000	394000	1412000	1000000	412000

ICAR is supporting research on tobacco through (1) Central Tobacco Research Institute Rajahmundry with its Regional stations located in different agro-climatic regions of the country and the (2) All India Coordinated Research Project on Tobacco with its coordinating unit at Anand and research centres located in 3 different universities, in addition to CTRI Regional Stations. Through sustained research, improved varieties and crop production technologies suited to different categories of tobacco and different agro-climatic regions have been developed. The FCV tobacco area in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka has been divided into microzones and package of practices have been standardised for the microzones especially to improve the yield and quality of export oriented crop.

Banking transactions by the States with the Reserve Bank of India

803. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that all the States excluding the States of Jammu and Kashmir and Sikkim, bank with the Reserve Bank of India for the purpose of their ways and means advances and overdrafts;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the exclusion of these two States from the requirement of banking with the Reserve Bank of India; and

(c) in what manner the check on the utilisation of their ways and

means advances are being kept by the Central Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B. K. GADHVI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) J. & K. Bank Ltd., which is a State owned bank, is carrying on the business of J. & K. Government within the State. When RBI entered into a restricted agreement with the State Government in 1972, to attend to work relating to the issue and management of public debt of the State Government, it was decided to continue the J. & K. Bank as banker of the Government of J. & K., since transfer of Government business from the Bank by withdrawing Government balances would have affected its financial position, viability and profitability. Weekly information regarding outstanding balances of J. & K. Government with the Bank is being furnished to RBI by J. & K. Government. As regards Sikkim State, its accounts are maintained with the State Bank of Sikkim and the Banking Regulation Act has been extended to the State of Sikkim only w.e.f. 15-12-1987. RBI can act as a banker to the State Government if the latter enters into an agreement with RBI.

Payments to contractors by NTC, Calcutta

804. SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Textile Corporation (WBABO) Limited, Calcutta is unable to make timely payments to the contractors presently engaged to carry out civil engineering jobs in the Jyoti Weaving Factory, Calcutta;

(b) whether as a result thereof the contractors are refusing to expedite the job completion;

(c) if so, what are the facts thereof and the details/numbers of such contractors working presently in the aforesaid factory alongwith value of jobs and dates of award of contracts and the time of completion, etc.; and

(d) what further steps are being proposed to be taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) No interruption of work has been reported.

(d) NTC has taken steps to expedite the completion of the jobs.

Rise in prices of Natural Rubber

805. SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether prices of natural rubber have shown a rising trend recently;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps Government have taken or propose to take to check the rubber prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) to (c) Excepting during January, 1988 when the prices of natural rubber have been slightly more than the prescribed price band, the price of rubber during the past three months have been within this band. This rise has been due to cessation of tapping season and increased demand for rubber.